



Patron: His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC
Governor of South Australia

October 2018

Welcome from the President

The Friends are planning a new venture to help us continue to sponsor State Opera South Australia productions and to support young and emerging artists.

The main Constitutional objectives and the core work of The Friends are:

- 'to assist and support the State Opera South Australia in all its activities, programs and productions'
- 'to raise funds for the benefit of the Company'
- 'to raise funds to support and sponsor the professional development of young artists associated with opera in South Australia'.



Some years ago The Friends received a very generous bequest which we have proudly managed and stewarded with caution and care. Combined with our many fundraising events and activities over the last ten years it has enabled us to give nearly \$500,000 directly to State Opera and young artists working with the Company. This year alone we donated \$35,000 to act as Production Sponsor of *The Pearl Fishers* as well as grants to two of our young artists for their study overseas. In 2019 we have committed \$20,000 to a production and propose to give a grant to a young artist and contribute to the Dawn Wallace Award at the Adelaide Eisteddfod.

In order to maintain this level of ongoing financial sponsorship and support, we need to find ways to grow and sustain a healthy capital base for our organisation. While we will be continuing with activities and fundraisers, we are also planning to apply 'to establish and maintain a Public Fund under the title *The Friends of the State Opera of South Australia Incorporated Public Fund ('Public Fund')* for listing on the Register of Cultural Organisations ('ROCO')'. As a member of The Friends this will ensure that your donation to our Public Fund will be Tax deductible and help us all continue in our work of supporting the State Opera South Australia.

We need to amend our Constitution 2016 to enable us to do this. We will be holding a **Special General Meeting of The Friends** on Monday 22nd October from 6pm in the Opera Studio. A notice of this meeting has been posted to all members. We look forward to seeing you there and to your continued support of the State Opera and The Friends.

Robina Weir



Trevor & Marlene Gregory, Francis Brooks and Christopher Stone at Uniquely Adelaide!

It is with great sadness that The Friends note the departure of both Deb Pahl and Judith Branford from the State Opera South Australia. As such we will be featuring an article acknowledging and detailing their extraordinary work for and contribution to the State Opera in their many years of service in the next edition of our newsletter.

Key Friends & State Opera Diary Dates 2018

- October 2nd, 4th, 7th @ 7.30pm [Dido and Aeneas](#) Plant 4, Bowden
 18th, 20th, 26th, 28th [Red Cross Gala](#) Various venues
 22nd @ 6pm [Special General Meeting](#) Opera Studio, Netley
- November 9th @ 7pm [The Merry Widow Dinner](#) Ayers House Invitation posted to members
 14th @ 7pm [OVI-The Merry Widow](#) Opera Studio, Netley Invitation posted to members
 29th, 30th & Dec 1st, 4th, 6th [The Merry Widow](#) Adelaide Festival Theatre

Presentation of Life Membership to Nicholas Braithwaite Opera Studio, Netley, 25th July 2018

Nicholas Braithwaite is recognized internationally as a renowned conductor for his distinguished career that has literally, spanned the globe! From his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and at Festival masterclasses in Bayreuth with the renowned Friedelind Wagner, he went on to be, amongst other appointments, associate conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and a resident conductor at Sadler's Wells Opera where he conducted Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

Nicholas is especially treasured in South Australia through his work as principal conductor of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra from 1987 to 1991. He has made recordings with the London Philharmonic, London Symphony and Philharmonic Orchestras among others, while his opera leadership includes performances with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Norwegian Opera, Opera Australia, New Zealand Opera and of course, our own State Opera of South Australia.

Nicholas' passion for Opera and for working with and encouraging young artists is legendary. Perhaps no words of ours can sufficiently express our gratitude and the debt we owe him as well as his own when he says:

For me, opera is without question the greatest of all the art forms. It takes you to the heart of human existence and philosophy because it embodies, includes and uses the power of words to provide you with absolute definitions of meanings. But the power of music to give you hidden depths of interpretations of those words, of the depth of emotion, duplicitousness, if you like, can give so many colours to what the words are actually saying that in fact a simple story gives you such emotional richness.

In gratitude and acknowledgement of the artistic riches which he has shared with us, President Robina Weir was proud to present Nicholas with Life Membership of The Friends of the State Opera South Australia.

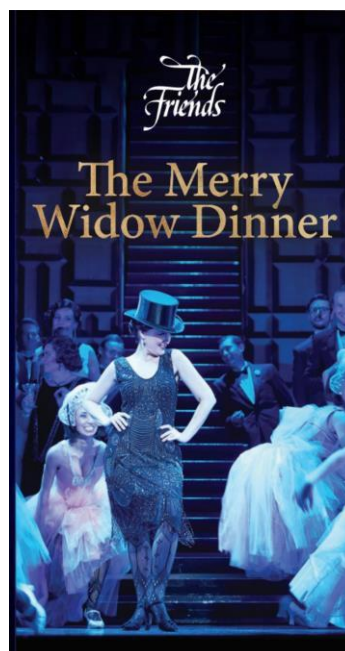


Nicholas Braithwaite & Pauline Brooks
cutting the cake



President Robina Weir presents Nicholas Braithwaite
with Life membership of The Friends

Please check your mail for your invitation to
this special event.



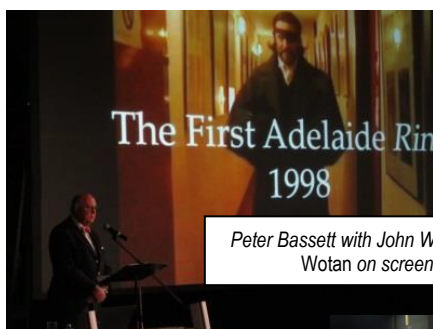
Uniquely Adelaide! Memories of the Wagner Decade! What a triumph!

In the lead up to State Opera South Australia's Wagner Gala Concert *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg Act III* and as a 20th Year Wagnerian retrospective The Friends were delighted to host a special evening featuring Dr Peter Bassett on Wednesday 1st August in the Opera Studio.

Known to many of The Friends, Dr Peter Bassett was Dramaturge and Artistic Administrator for the 2004 Adelaide *Ring* and is a regular contributor to Opera Australia's programs. As author and speaker he has published widely on Wagner's works, recorded talks on the *Ring* for Decca, and has lectured in Europe, North America and throughout Australia and New Zealand. For two decades Peter served in the Australian diplomatic service and, since 2001 has led more than 40 overseas opera tours.

In front of a wonderful display of Wagner costumes and memorabilia, and to over 120 Friends and guests (including our wonderful Fricka, Elizabeth Campbell) Peter presented and spoke to a retrospective video which featured Adelaide's 1998 *Ring Cycle*, 2001 *Parsifal* and the 2004 *Ring Cycle*. The extraordinary footage included exciting excerpts from rehearsals and performances as well as clips from the 1997 'Weekend with the Ring' Conference and the 2003 'Glimmer of Gold' Weekend! Together with Peter's fascinating narrative it was a reminder of the extraordinary and staggering achievement that was, in particular, the 2004 Adelaide *Ring*. In addition it was a great hymn of praise to the Company, the people, artists, production teams, sponsors, partnerships and global audiences that shared in this Uniquely Adelaide operatic triumph. To Peter our thanks for his huge contribution to the success of all that made the Wagner Decade so unforgettable and for sharing his deep love and knowledge of all that is Wagner with us.

Pauline Brooks OAM



Peter Bassett with John Wegner as Wotan on screen



Peter Bassett & Francis Brooks with Ring 2004 memorabilia



Francis & Pauline Brooks



Elizabeth Campbell (Fricka Ring 2004)

Opera Voices Introduction to *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg Act III*

On the evening of July 25th the *Opera Voices* Introduction to Wagner's *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg Act III* was held at the Opera Studio. For many in the audience this was an opportunity to learn about an opera they had never seen, but for a few seasoned Wagnerians, it was an opportunity to re-acquaint themselves with it. The process was helped immensely by the commentary of conductor Nicholas Braithwaite and director Andrew Sinclair. In particular, the Maestro's summary of Acts I and II, followed by a description of the events in Act III, gave context to the whole discussion. Seated in front of part of the basic set as well as the banners belonging to the various guilds in the opera (giving a slightly Hogwarts-like atmosphere to the proceedings), these two veterans of many Wagner productions discussed the themes in the opera with great insight. During a brief break in proceedings, Nicholas Braithwaite accepted Life Membership of The Friends (see separate article) and then, after a couple of musical examples, the audience was able to discuss the opera and all things Wagner over refreshments.



Christopher Stone, Andrew Sinclair & Nicholas Braithwaite

Christopher Stone



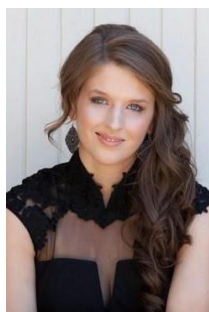
News from State Opera Staff and Artists



On Thursday 28th September Yarmila Alfonzetti, Executive Director and Stuart Maunder, Artistic Director launched the State Opera South Australia 2019 season at Plant 4 Bowden It will be a busy and exciting year starting with a special event *Carmen in the Square* for one night only in March in Victoria Square. In May *Cunning Little Vixen* comes to Adelaide for the first time at the Ridley Centre. Later in the year, at the Festival Theatre there will be new productions of *Madama Butterfly* and *The Mikado*. There are also special performances of Purcell's *King Arthur* by the Gabrieli Consort, a *Girls' Night Out* conducted by Simone Young, celebrating the music of Richard Strauss, and special recitals, talks and a series of some very important Australian works under the title *The Lost Operas of Oz*. Brochures giving full details of the extensive program have been posted to all subscribers with details on how you can buy tickets and packages through BASS.



Karina Bligh



By the time you read this Karina will have arrived in the UK, to commence her Master of Opera at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She will be learning from the wonderful Kathleen McKellar-Ferguson and taking part in intensive practical opera training for two years.

Karina, with Charlotte Walsh and Lachlan Scott, accompanied by Mark Sandon, recently gave a wonderful farewell concert *Voices and Vines* at Golding Winery.

We wish her well in her new endeavour and hope to hear how she is progressing from time to time.

Nicolas Cannon



Nicolas has returned from a wonderful learning experience with Opera Nice Cote d'Azur where he sat in on the final technical production and performance of *Nabucco* by Giuseppe Verdi. He had the opportunity to discuss the production with many of the Creatives. While in Europe he also met with many senior administrative and creative staff of major opera companies. His report is available on our website at saopera.sa.gov.au/the-friends/

Nicolas is the Director of the State Opera/Elder Conservatorium production of *Dido & Aeneas* to be held on 2nd, 4th, 7th October at Plant 4 Bowden.

Read More [Here](#).



Welcome New Members

Noel and Shirley Maddock
Michael Weaver
Father Brian Angus
John McCarthy





The Friends Committee gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the staff of State Opera SA

of the State Opera of South Australia Inc

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